

# Stay Safe. Stay Warm. Stay Informed.

By Senator Lisa Boscola

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the first responders, emergency personnel and public works staff who have been working around the clock to keep our communities safe during and after these winter storms.

Please make sure to stay warm during these frigid temps and check on your elderly friends, family & neighbors.

Staying Warm This Winter  
Your Winter Energy Checklist: Simple Steps to Save and Stay Connected  
To help consumers prepare for colder months, the Pennsylvania Utility Commission (PUC) encourages everyone to take these simple steps:  
Review your utility bills. Understand your current rate and usage — and how colder weather can increase demand.

Don't wait to call. If you're worried about paying your bill, contact your utility now to ask about assistance programs or payment plans.

Ask about affordability programs. Utilities offer programs like CAPs, budget billing, and hardship funds that can reduce your monthly costs.

Make small energy-saving changes. Lower your thermostat by one or two degrees, check furnace filters, and seal drafts — small actions that add up.

Explore energy-saving tools. Visit PAPowerSwitch.com and PAGasSwitch.com for energy tips, shopping options, and more ways to save.

Consumers who cannot resolve issues directly with their utility can contact the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at 1-800-692-7380 for help or more information about available programs.

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*Keep Pets Safe this Winter:*

- **Beware of cold temperatures** - puppies, smaller dogs, older dogs and cats should not be left outdoors when the temperature falls below 40 degrees.
- **Provide a protective shelter**
- **Keep older, arthritic pets inside** - These animals should not be left outside under any circumstances. Escort the older dog outside for toileting and use a leash if the yard has ice or snow. Older dogs can easily fall and seriously injure themselves.
- **Keep an eye out for hypothermia** - If you notice shivering, lethargy, low heart rate and unresponsiveness, bring your pet into a warm area, place a light blanket over him, and call your veterinarian.
- **Don't leave your dog inside a parked car** - Most people know this rule for the summer. A parked car can quickly amplify the effects of extreme weather. During the winter it can act as an icebox and trap cold air inside.
- **Eliminate the possibility of poisoning** - Unfortunately, dogs like the sweet taste of antifreeze, which can cause sickness or even death if ingested. Make certain that all antifreeze containers are well out of reach of dogs and thoroughly clean any spills immediately.

## Keep Your Pets & Animals Safe This Winter

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Keep your animals safe and comfortable this winter! Be sure to check your companion's paws for ice, snow, and de-icing chemicals that can cause irritation or be ingested.

Common winter hazards include:

Frozen or inaccessible drinking water

Inadequate shelter from wind and moisture

Increased calorie needs due to cold stress

Delayed access to veterinary or emergency care during storms

Power outages that affect heating, lighting and life-sustaining equipment

Preparation helps reduce these risks before they escalate into emergencies.

Keep Your Pets & Animals Safe This Winter

Visit the link for more helpful information: <https://www.americanhumane.org/publi.../winter-preparedness/>

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